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CHILDREN WITHOUT - WITHOUT MOTIVATION.

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THE WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM IN TENNILLE, GEORGIA, SET UP A PILOT READING CENTER IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PROGRAM AT TENNILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE TREATMENT FOR ITS DISABLED READERS AND TO IMPROVE ITS DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM THROUGH INSERVICE EDUCATION. THIRTY-FOUR CHILDREN WITHOUT MOTIVATION WERE TAUGHT BY DEMONSTRATION TEACHERS WHO WORKED WITH GROUPS OF FROM ONE TO SIX CHILDREN FOR 30 TO 60 MINUTES ON 2 TO 5 DAYS A WEEK. THE TEACHING METHODS USED WERE DIAGNOSTIC, INDIVIDUALIZED, HIGHLY MOTIVATIVE, AND CREATIVE. TO CREATE IN THE CHILD THE DESIRE TO READ, MOTIVATIONAL TECHNIQUES VARIED WITH EACH CHILD. HOWEVER, THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR WAS AN UNDERSTANDING TEACHER WHO ACCEPTED EACH CHILD FOR WHAT HE WAS, WHO RESPECTED HIS INDIVIDUALITY, HAD CONFIDENCE IN HIS CAPABILITIES, AND ASSURED HIM OF SOME KIND OF SUCCESS. THE CENTER ALSO CONDUCTED RESEARCH AND EXAMINED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS. THROUGH AN OPERATIONAL GRANT, THE PILOT PROJECT WAS IMPROVED AND EXTENDED TO INCLUDE 12 SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN THE AREA. WORK ON READING DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ALSO WAS UNDERTAKEN. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE (SEATTLE, MAY 4-6, 1967). (NS)

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Session II: The Culturally Disadvantaged Reader

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CHILDREN WITHOUT - WITHOUT MOTIVATION
Session II: The Culturally Disadvantaged Reader

Let me take you on a verbal trip to rural central Georgia. The town is Tennille; population 1,847. I want you to meet Jimmy, age eight, a member of the third grade class of the Tennille Elementary School. Jimmy first came to the Reading Center in March of 1967. He informed everyone at the center that he could not read and that furthermore he did not want to learn how. Rapport was not easily established. Verbal approaches failed, but a smile or a wink would sometimes result in a positive response. When asked what he liked, his answer was, "Nothing!" Efforts to find Jimmy's interests continued.

At last he volunteered to tell about his experiences of the afternoon before. Jimmy talked about Steve, the adult identity in his life. Steve had taken Jimmy to ride on his tractor. Now Jimmy dictates stories about Steve and about farm life for an experience chart. He enjoys reading his own simple, yet true stories. Jimmy has cut pictures from the Progressive Farmer to illustrate stories he has dictated to his classroom teacher.

Vast amounts of materials are not the most essential elements to be considered in motivation. The vital ingredient is a creative, understanding teacher who is keenly interested in boys and girls.

In March Jimmy was a child without - without motivation. Jimmy is now learning to read, because reading has become meaningful. He can see himself in what he is reading; he is involved.

There are many Jimmys in our schools today. Many of these children without motivation are the much-read-about, much-talked-about, culturally deprived children. How can children who do not like books, who have an aversion to reading, be encouraged and led to read - not because they are forced to do so, but because they want to?

Motivation: Definition of and Factors Affecting

A great deal of time could be spent defining the term motivation. The definition used here is "the need and desire to know or to do." While there is often a lack of motivational factors operating among the culturally deprived children, the problem is not one of culture alone. There are those whose culture puts little value on "the need to know"; yet there are culturally deprived children who present no motivational problems. Conversely there are children from environments one would never characterize as culturally poor who also need motivation.

The degree and type of motivation necessary to create a good climate for learning to read depend upon many factors. The individual's interests, physical well-being, emotional stability, and mental alertness are but a few of these. Children who require extensive and imaginative motivational techniques, if they are to be successful readers, are those who are emotionally deprived. These children are truly without. They may be without love; therefore, they feel alone. They are often those who fail; therefore, they feel inadequate. Perhaps they are bored; therefore, they are dull or tired. It could be that they have been pressured to "do better" and have rebelled. They could be ill, sleepy, or hungry and

therefore listless. Often they are those who present behavioral problems; therefore, they have been labeled "bad." Perhaps they feel they are different and, as a result, they are ashamed. Could it be that concentration is limited because of energy depletion? In an effort to solve their problems, they may have used up their energy supply. Perhaps these children who are without motivation are troubled and can be characterized by such terms as hyperactive, aggressive, or withdrawn.

Principles of Motivation

Whatever the circumstances, the teacher, whether the classroom teacher or the remedial reading teacher, must surmount a problem if our children without - without motivation - are to learn to read. The problem is how to create, on the part of the child, a need and a desire to read. The child must be a success. Reading must be rewarding. The child must become involved. When does reading become an integral part of self? Reading becomes an integral part of self when reading goals become the reader's goals. These must be close at hand. Few, if any, children have learned to read because they want to be able to go to college. The child must read to solve a problem or he must satisfy an immediate need through

reading. A problem may be to find out how to play a game or read a letter. Reading can be the means through which such needs as approval, recognition, and praise are realized. Referring to children who have the ability to do so, Smith and Dechant have said, "A child will learn to read if by doing so he can get the esteem of his parents, his teacher, his peers, or if he can increase his own self-esteem" (1).

Each child - whether culturally deprived, emotionally deprived, or educationally deprived - must be accepted for what he is. When a child's language is not accepted by his teacher, he will often refuse to use language. He fears ridicule and feels unaccepted in the classroom situation. To be positively motivated, acceptance of the child and his environment is a necessity. If his language is not accepted, he is in effect being told, "Your culture is not acceptable; therefore, you who are a product of this 'poor' culture are not acceptable."

Of all the facets of reading that come to mind as the writer thinks of motivation, one stands above all the rest - appropriateness of the materials used. Not only the reluctant reader, but every reader, if learning is to take place, must be presented materials appropriate for his or her reading level. Nothing yields success like successful experiences;

nothing yields failure like continually failing. Nothing can stand in the way of motivation more than being forced to attempt to handle materials that are too difficult. Not only should materials be appropriate in terms of the instructional level, but also in terms of interest. Interest and curiosity play vital roles in good motivational techniques.

It is simple to expound on ideas and theories, but let us see what we are doing in our schools about the problems of the culturally, emotionally, and educationally deprived children.

Title III ESEA Planning Grant

The most exciting thing that has ever happened in the writer's professional life took place in April of 1966. The Washington County Board of Education in Sandersville, Georgia, was awarded a Title III ESEA Grant by the United States Office of Education. The project, "Developing a Pilot Reading Program," originated with two other classroom teachers, Mrs. Catherine B. Thurston and Mrs. Kathleen M. Hodges, and the writer.

Twelve school systems from the area joined the Washington County School System in efforts to provide treatment for disabled readers and to improve the developmental reading

program through in-service education of classroom teachers. The combined population of the area served is 176,455. The participating area lies in the southeastern portion of the Piedmont Plateau and the northeastern section of the Atlantic Coastal Plain, having a combined area of 4,991 square miles.

Reading Center

The Planning Grant stages a pilot demonstration center operating as a part of the program of the Tennille Elementary School in Tennille, Georgia. Thirty-four children are receiving direct teaching services. Demonstration teachers work with groups ranging in size from one to six for thirty minutes to one hour on two to five days a week. Participants come to the Reading Center from their regular classrooms; however, for a few students, work in the Reading Center means a longer school day. The average IQ of the students, according to standardized tests, is 104. The extent of reading disability in September ranged from 1.3 to 4.6 years. For purposes of screening the students, achievement test scores and reading expectancy levels were compared to determine disabilities. Reading expectiancy levels were determined by a recognized formula. Permanent records were studied and teacher-opinion was sought.

Emphasis, however, is upon the creation of a model center.

This design of an innovation is to be refined, further tested, and more keenly developed during an Operational Grant period. On-going in-service education has been anintegral part of the project. Approximately two hundred visitors, including classroom teachers, have observed in the demonstration center. Project personnel have visited similar programs and attended reading conferences throughout the nation.

No one method or special materials are used. Teaching methods are diagnostic, dynamic, pragmatic, varied, individualistic, creative, flexible, and highly motivative. Each child's program is planned according to his unique needs and interests, beginning with materials having meaning for a child's particular culture and changing as cultural aspirations rise. Each session is a diagnostic session. Materials and methods which yield positive results are employed; those yielding negative results are discarded. The philosophy that permeates each teaching session is to respect every child as an individual, to show faith in his ability, and to create a learning environment where success is achieved. Subjectively, it has been determined that one of the greatest areas of growth lies in the field of personality and the development of more positive self-concepts. In general, the thirty-four students first came to the Reading Center as children without - without

motivation. These children had met with repeated failures. Today many remain deprived; but few, if any, are without motivation.

Students throughout the thirteen-county area are benefiting from the diagnostic services offered as a part of the pilot program. As children's reading problems are diagnosed, recommendations are made to classroom teachers. These are comprehensive and practical. They include more than test scores. Many instruments are used. Among these are:

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
Informal Reading Inventory
Gray Oral Reading Test
Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty
Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales
Gates Reading Survey
Iowa Work-Study Skills
Informal Interview
Telebinocular
Audiometer

In addition to the demonstration aspects of the educational laboratory, materials have been studied and research has been conducted. A reading survey of 11,500 children in grades four through seven in the thirteen participating systems has revealed that 25 per cent of these students are "severely disabled" readers. A severely disabled reader has been defined as one who is reading more than one and one-half years below his reading

expectancy.

A cultural study is also underway. Cultural deprivation is prevalent in this rural central Georgia area. The mid-point of the median family income in the thirteen counties is less than $3,000. The non-white population is 48.4 per cent.

Title III ESEA Operational Grant

As a result of experiences gained and the efforts of an Advisory Board and visiting consultants, an Operational Grant proposal was submitted to the United States Office of Education on January 15, 1967. This grant will make an extension and improvements of the present program possible. The title of the Operational Grant phase, "PROGRESS Thirteen," is an acrostic for Pilot Reading Organization with Guidance through Research, Experimentation, and Scientific Study. The thirteen denotes the thirteen original participating systems.

A program concerning the prevention of reading disabilities will also be undertaken in the area of early childhood education. Work is to begin with six-year-olds; however, it is anticipated that the program will later involve three, four, and five-year-old children.

Project personnel believe the in-service aspects of the project to be a most significant part of the proposed program.

On-going in-service education plans include sessioms with classroom teachers led by outstanding consultants, and ddemonstrations of the teaching of large groups by means of video ttape. Substitute teachers will also free classroom teachers to visit the demonstration centers. Reading supervisors will bee available for consultations with classroom teachers. Even though the treatment aspects of the project can be invaluable, prevention of reading disabilities in the classroom is the ulltimate goal. It is recognized that the classroom teacher is, amnd will remain, the backbone of our educational system.

Motivational Techniques

In August a reading consultant came to Washington County, Georgia, en route from Florida to California. Upoon hearing about the innovative and exemplary project in this ruraal county, she had come to visit the Reading Center. Her remarkc was, "I've never been to such a little out-of-the-way place in such a little plare and seen such exciting things going on!" Yes, exciting things have gone on, especially for the personnell connected with the project and the thirty-four children whoo come to the center. You met Jimmy. I would also like to inttroduce you to the other thirty-three participants of the Pilot Reading Center, but there is time to meet only a few.

Jane is a sixth grade girl who read her first book just for fun in the fall. The only motivation Jane needed was encouragement, praise, and assurance that she would become a better reader. These ingredients were coupled with appropriate materials; Jane is making outstanding progress.

Tom has many emotional problems. Sometimes his problems are so great, he and I just talk. Other times, I read to him. Tom needs to succeed. He responds to the Language Master and other mechanical aids. Operating the machines is motivating; Tom is in control. This gives him a sense of power. He learns to spell by typing the words over and over on a primer typewriter.

Phillip has been motivated through art. A book has been written especially for him to illustrate. He found a need to read the book in order to make the illustrations.

Drama and creative play mean motivation for Mike. Mike was a non-reader in December. He learned to read his script on tape in preparation for a pantomime to present in his classroom. Mike, a very sensitive nine-year-old boy, found an identification with the story character, Denny, who found a lost puppy. Being successful before his own peer group has been an extremely valuable motivational aid.

Rod loves cars. He has been motivated with books about cars. Recently he was asked to draw a motor and explain how

it worked. This required much reading and Rod mastered the task.

Joe can be motivated through external rewards. He will work for praise, for good grades, or for positive comments on his papers. He needs and requires much individual attention. His favorite method of receiving this is to discuss stories he has read silently or to read orally in a one-to-one relationship.

Johnny's language patterns are not those generally accepted in a middle-class culture. Recently, with the aid of a Language Master, Johnny listened on the instructor's tract to the phrase, "the baseball game." He in turn recorded on the student's tract "de baseball game." As he listened a second time to the instructor's phrase and then to his own, he commented that he needed to record his again. This time he proudly said, "The baseball game."

Puppetry has motivated many children. Puppets are used in various ways. A favorite way has been to have the children read scripts for a play as they manipulate their puppet characters. The shy and withdrawn child and the child who daydreams find this especially satisfying.

Conclusion

Yes, we are tackling our educational problems as we plan for our children without - the culturally deprived, the emotionally deprived, and the educationally deprived. Next year we look...

forward to the further refinement and extension of our present program.

We know that if there are to be successful reading experiences, there must be motivation - not only motivation of students, but motivation of teachers. Motivation of students may continue to challenge us. As this is accomplished, however, teachers are motivated because there can be no greater motivation than the realization that children who once did not want to read can hardly wait to get out of the hall to run to the Reading Center. These children are chiefly motivated because they are succeeding; reading has become fun.

There have also been external motivations. We call this reinforcement for learning. What is it? Every child gets a piece of hard candy from the big candy jar every day, not because he did well (we know he will do well; we make sure of that), but because the Reading Center is a special place and each is a special person!

Reference

1. Smith, Henry P., and Dechant, Emerald V. Psychology in Teaching Reading Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961.